

## **MedTrack: Irelands Medical Career Tracking Study Participant Information**

### **Principal Investigator**

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You are being invited to take part in a research study carried out at RCSI by Professor Ruairi Brugha. As a final year medical student, you will be aware that consent to participate in research must be informed and freely given, and that you can withdraw your consent at any point.

### **Why is this study being done?**

Over the last 3-4 years, doctors have been emigrating from Ireland in greater numbers than before. Our research aims to develop a better understanding of the intentions, motivations and long-term plans of medical students and graduates in Ireland. This information will help workforce planners to develop measures to retain and provide stable careers for doctors in the Irish health system.

This study – which has been welcomed by the Department of Health, and is being supported by HSE National Doctor Training and Planning and the Forum of Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies – will produce essential knowledge. We aim to identify and better understand students' speciality choices, why medical graduates leave or remain and which career measures are most likely to encourage medical graduates to make their long term careers in Ireland.

### **Who is organising and funding this study?**

The research project is funded by the Health Research Board, and has been designed and is being run by the RCSI MedTrack Project Team.

### **Why am I being asked to take part?**

As a final year medical student in 2017, you are being asked to complete a short survey in order to track medical graduates' career choices and decisions over a three year period. The research team greatly appreciate your contribution to the MedTrack Project which will inform future training programmes.

### **How will the study be carried out?**

You are asked to complete the initial survey (Phase A1) and agree to follow-up contact. If you complete this first baseline survey you will be invited to participate in Phases A2, A3 and B of the project. They will take place during 2017/2018 and will involve the following:

**Phase A2/ A3:** A follow up survey will take place in late 2017 or early 2018. These surveys, combined with the initial survey you will complete here, will allow us to understand how final year medical students decisions about working as a doctor in Ireland and speciality choice in Ireland, change over time.

**Phase B:** You may be invited to take part in an interview during 2016/2017/2018. This will involve meeting or talking with a researcher (in person or by phone) about your decision to leave or remain working in medicine in Ireland, your speciality choice and your plans for the future. The interview will take about 45 minutes of your time. We plan to interview 20-30 final year medical students and graduates in this way. These interviews will enable the research team to develop a more in-depth, detailed understanding of the issues.

#### **What will happen to me if I agree to take part?**

**Phase A:** The RCSI research team are asking you to complete a short 2 minute survey now. Unless you have opted out, we will invite graduates to complete a further survey in late 2017 or early 2018. The survey will focus on medical graduates' future career (remain or leave medicine) and speciality plans, what graduates would most value in a career and if they are interested in making their long-term careers in Ireland.

**Phase B:** The RCSI research team will conduct a small number (20-30) of one-to-one interviews with consenting final year medical students and graduates in 2016 or 2017 and 2018. Each interview will take around 30-45 minutes and will be conducted either by phone or in person. With your consent, the interview will be audio recorded and you will be entitled to review and amend the record (transcript) of that interview.

#### **How will my contact details be used?**

- (i) If you provided your contact details to us by completing the initial survey, you are free to decline to undertake any follow-up interview or survey at a later date. We will delete your contact details on request.
- (ii) Your contact details are being kept under secure conditions in a separate password protected file, not connected to any information held about you; and only available to the RCSI MedTrack project team.
- (iii) Your contact details will be used only for the research purposes outlined here, in line with the ethics approval obtained from the RCSI Ethics Committee. Your details will not be divulged to anyone else and you will retain the full protection of the Data Protection Act.

#### **What are the benefits?**

Taking part in this research study will enable us to inform medical workforce planners about the experiences of medical graduates who remain or decide to leave medicine; their motivations for doing so and their decisions to enter particular specialities. We will use the research findings to support policy makers and workforce planners to develop strategies to retain and provide sufficient career opportunities for medical graduates in the Irish health system.

### **What are the risks?**

Taking part in an interview for the MedTrack Project, if invited, will take approx. 30-45 minutes of your time. Taking part in a follow-up survey for the project will take 10-15 minutes. Given the stringent confidentiality and data security controls, we believe there are no risks associated with your participating.

### **Is the study confidential?**

All information collected by the MedTrack Project team will be kept in a private and confidential manner. Where contact information is collected, it will be stored securely and will be held only for as long as required. Any interview audio recordings will be destroyed as soon as transcribed. All research data will be held for 7 years and then destroyed.

When we communicate the research results in journals or reports or conferences, no identifying information about you will be used, you will be referred to by number rather than name, e.g. as Respondent 9 or Survey Respondent 23. We would be delighted to share the results of the study with you (journals, conference presentations). If you would be interested in receiving updates, please email us and we will add your details to our mailing list.

### **Where can I get further information?**

If you have any further questions about the study, if you want to opt out of the MedTrack Project or if you need any further information now or at any time in the future, please contact:

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